The scheme *inter alia* provides for financing of electrification of all un-electrified Below Poverty Line (BPL) households in the country with 100% capital subsidy as per norms of Kutir Jyoti Programme in all rural habitations.

For projects to be eligible for capital subsidy under this scheme prior commitment of the State would be taken before sanction of the projects for;

(i) deployment of franchisees for the management of rural distribution in projects financed under this scheme;

(ii) provision of requisite revenue subsidy to the State utilities as required under the Electricity Act., 2003.

The State would also be required to make adequate arrangements for supply of electricity and there should be no discrimination in the hours of supply between rural and urban households.

The scheme covers the entire country and the funds would be released on the basis of sanction of the projects submitted. The scheme aims at completing electrification of all unelectrified villages and unelectrified hamlets in next five years. It is estimated that Rs. 16,000 crore would be required for the entire scheme. For Phase I of scheme approved for implementation during 10th Five Year Plan Period Rs. 5,000 crore has been provided by the Central Government as Capital subsidy.

(c) to (e) All the villages Kerala are electrified. However, proposal for electrification of 3367 un-electrified karas in 879 villages of 14 districts involving an outlay of Rs. 337 crore have been received by the REC. These are under process by the REC.

Option of Choosing Power Distributing Company by Consumers

†4452. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact under the Electricity Act, 2003 the consumers of electricity have been empowered to get their power connections from a power distributing company of their choice;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the State Electricity Boards continue to hold monopoly of the power distributing system in the country; and

(c) if so, the States in the country where the responsibility of distributing power rests with more than two orgnizations and the States where monopoly of power distributing still continues?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.M. SAYEED): (a) Yes, Sir. The Electricity Act, 2003 provides for open access in transmission from the outset. Section 42 of the Act provides that the State Regulatory Commissions shall introduce open access in distribution in phases having due regard to all relevant factors including cross subsidy and other operational constraints. The Act further provides that open access to all consumers, who require a supply of electricity, where the maximum power to be made available at any time exceeds one megawatt, be provided not later than 27th January 2009.

The Act also provides that the Appropriate Commission may grant a license to two or more persons for distribution of electricity through their own distribution system within the same area.

(b) Distribution of electricity under the Act is a licensed activity and the license is granted by the Appropriate Regulatory Commission.

(c) As per available information, the States in which the responsibility of distributing power rests with more than one organization are West Bengal, Orissa, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Kerala.

Electrified villages under RGGVY

4453. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN. Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the definition of a electrified villages under Rajeev Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana;

(b) the number of non-electrified villages in the country State-wise; and

(c) the time schedule to complete the rural electrification?